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OUTLOOK NOTES

THE admirable articles of Dr. Atkinson and Dr. Burnham in the December SCHOOL REVIEW really open a new era of thought and discussion for secondary-school teachers. Since **PUPIL STUDY** the world began, so far as concerns education, some teachers have been studying pupils. Great teachers have uniformly given more thought to their pupils than to school organization. Educational psychology has issued in pedagogic dogma and formal methods. The marvelous expansion of the field of education during this century has compelled the giving of a large measure of attention to questions of organization and management. For the past five years the question of curriculum has dominated all discussion of secondary education. The Principal as Programme Maker has been the hero of the hour. May not the next hero be the Principal as Pupil Student? Is it not time to shift the emphasis a little from the organized whole to the individual unit? Are we all not in danger of forgetting at times that the school exists wholly for the good of the individual student? The whole question is one of perspective. Let us bring into the foreground the individual boy or girl in that trying adolescent period so fraught with danger yet so glorious in possibilities.

WHAT objections may be urged against such pupil study, with the added attention to the individual that it necessarily **PARTIALITY** implies? A few days ago a good principal told me he was afraid the public would raise the cry of partiality. This country is a democracy. All men are created free and equal. All are entitled to precisely the same treatment in the schools. There must be a uniform course of study through which all children must be driven. This principal believes this doctrine; he will have no pupil study in his school at present.

Doubtless this objection will be met in many places. The battle must be fought at this point against one of the worst fundamental evils of any democracy and against the most erroneous and perhaps most widespread misconception as to the true meaning of democracy. The self-evident truth that all men are born equal is no more true as to mind and character than it is as to body. In a democracy all are entitled to the fullest opportunity for the development of all the powers and capacities with which they are endowed. To limit all to the same opportunities is not liberty but the worst form of despotism.

Partiality which results from the personal likes and dislikes of the teacher belongs to the absolute despotisms of the Orient and has nothing whatever in common with that wise adjustment of tasks to the strength of the pupil which result from a careful and dispassionate study of the child's nature. Wise foreign critics have said that a republican form of government tends to produce a dead-level civilization. Our uniform courses undoubtedly tend the same way. But such uniform treatment is not justice, but on the contrary the darkest injustice to the child. The best gift is opportunity, and this gift it is the duty of the public school system to extend fully and freely to every child. The principle of differentiation has already been fully recognized in the establishing of separate schools for various classes of defectives and delinquents. It is simple justice that normal healthy children with varying capacities should not be mercilessly fitted to the same Procrustean bed. Those "born long" should have as good a chance as those "born short."

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